



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **BASHAM AND FARRAH ANNOUNCE FUNDING FOR SOUTHGATE COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT'S SERVICE-LEARNING PROGRAM**

**Southgate, Michigan, June 21, 2006** — Today Senate Ray Basham (D-Taylor) and Representative Barb Farrah (D-Southgate) announced that a \$24,500 grant was awarded to the Southgate Community School District to operate a Learn and Serve – Michigan program. Through this grant, the school district will implement a service-learning program.

Service-learning is a way of teaching and learning that connects meaningful service to the community with classroom instruction. This innovative teaching method supports the Michigan Department of Education's goal of supporting individualized learning, real-world experiences, and higher standards for learning. Service-learning engages students in critical analysis, research, synthesis of information, problem-solving, reflection, decision making, and reasoning. It does all of this while increasing the students' personal and social responsibility.

The Michigan Community Service Commission awarded the grants.

"The Southgate Community School District is to be commended for its efforts with the learn and serve program," said Sen. Basham. "This creative approach to learning is proven to not only teach students about democracy and citizenship, but also build their character and develop them in to actively contributing citizens and community members."

"Service-learning is a real advancement in the field of education," said Rep. Farrah. "Children will take what they learn in the classroom and use their skills in real-life experiences in the community. They will expand their learning and our community will benefit from their service."

The Southgate Community School District's "Teaching Core Democratic Values Through Service-Learning" program will integrate service-learning activities into the K-12 curriculum with special relevance to the core democratic values. The program is designed to include teacher professional

development and mini-grants for projects so that students district wide can be engaged in service-learning. Designed to contribute to school improvement goals in the areas of student achievement, the acquisition of lifelong learning skills and career education, the program will engage a minimum of 868 students this coming school year.

The program is slated to begin in September 2006. To find out more about the “Teaching Core Democratic Values Through Service-Learning” program, contact Mary Lou Provost with the Southgate Community School District at 734-246-4600 or [provostm@sgate.k-12.mi.us](mailto:provostm@sgate.k-12.mi.us)

### **BACKGROUND:**

**Learn and Serve – Michigan** is a competitive grant program that supports service-learning opportunities throughout individual school districts all over the state of Michigan. Service-learning has been shown to:

- Increase motivation to learn,
- Lower drop out rates, and
- Build critical thinking and problem solving skills.

The **Michigan Community Service Commission** is a state agency that is building a culture of service by providing vision and resources to strengthen communities through volunteerism. Chaired by First Gentleman Daniel Granholm Mulhern, the MCSC’s premiere programs are Mentor Michigan, AmeriCorps, Learn and Serve, Governor’s Service Awards, and Volunteer Investment Grants. For more information about the Michigan Community Service Commission visit [www.michigan.gov/mcsc](http://www.michigan.gov/mcsc) or call (517) 335-4295.

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